

## **What is trichinosis?**

Trichinosis, also known as trichinellosis, is a worldwide, foodborne disease caused by an intestinal roundworm. It is not common in the United States.

## **Who gets trichinosis?**

Trichinosis occurs more often in people who eat sausage and other meat products using pork, but anyone who eats raw or undercooked meat of infected animals can develop the disease.

## **How is trichinosis spread?**

The disease is not spread from person to person. It is caused by eating raw or undercooked meat that contains the roundworm. Animals are infective for months and pass the worms on to other animals. Meat from them can stay infected unless properly cooked or frozen.

## **What are the symptoms of trichinosis?**

People exposed to this parasite may experience muscle soreness and pain together with swelling of the upper eyelids. Thirst, sweating, chills, fever, diarrhea and weakness may also be present. The disease may be mild or very severe.

## **How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?**

Symptoms usually develop 8-15 days after eating the infected meat, with a range of 5-45 days.

## **Does past infection with trichinosis make a person immune?**

After a person has trichinosis, he/she may be resistant to having it again.

## **How is it diagnosed?**

Trichinosis is diagnosed by a blood test or by a biopsy of the muscle to identify the parasite.

## **What is the treatment for trichinosis?**

A drug called mebendazole is used to treat trichinosis.

## **How can trichinosis be prevented?**

The most important precaution is to make sure that all fresh pork and pork products are properly cooked. Other raw and undercooked meat should also be avoided, especially meat from wild animals.

